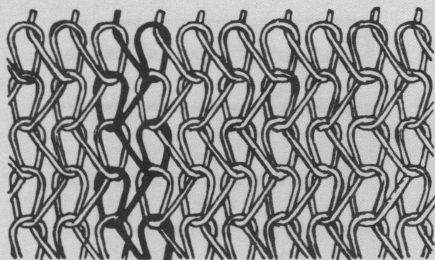


TRICOT KNIT LOOKS ALL SEWN UP

Marilyn Brown*

Sewing tricot knit is one of the latest sewing trends among women who value individuality or enjoy working with a new fabric that is different and fun.

Tricot, a warp-knit, is characterized by fine vertical ribs on the right side and crosswise ribbings on the wrong side. Tricot is runproof, snag resistant and non-raveling. It resists bagging and creasing in wear. Tricot fabrics are usually smooth, soft and flowing.



Tricot fabrics are used for women's wear in dresses, blouses, lingerie and swimwear. In men's wear, some shorts, slacks and summer-weight jackets are made of tricot. Pile knits and velours are also of tricot construction.

TOOLS

Your regular sewing equipment can be used with some possible additions.

Shears—Use bent shears because they lift the fabric less. Wipe lint from blades as you cut and cut through sandpaper #00 to sharpen.

Pins—Ball point pins which slip between the threads in tricot knit, rather than piercing them, are available. Sharp and fine pointed pins, though, are quite suitable.

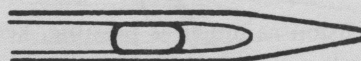
Marking—Use red or blue pencil which will wash out. DO NOT use lead pencil or dress-maker's carbon paper. You may want to use transparent cellophane tape to mark the right side of the fabric.

Thread—Use the cotton-polyester core thread or 100% polyester thread. Both are strong and have "give." Special nylon thread designed for tricot is also available.

Needles—Use a #9 or #11 ball point or a rounded point needle. This pushes the yarns aside instead of piercing and damaging the fiber. If you cannot find this, use a #9 machine needle; however, this is hard to thread and bends easily. Use #9 needle for hand sewing. Change needles often to prevent snagging. Synthetic fabric dulls needles. A new needle makes prettier stitches. All-purpose needles are also designed for use on tricot fabric.



BALLPOINT NEEDLE



REGULAR NEEDLE

Sewing Machine—It must operate well because of the delicacy of tricot fabrics. The sewing surface must be free of sharp or rough spots, lint, dust and oil as these might damage the fabric.

Presser Foot—A roller presser foot is also helpful, since it holds the fabric in place while sewing.

SELECT A PATTERN

For Lingerie: All major pattern companies carry lingerie patterns. These patterns have a measurement chart on the envelope and are sold by dress size. Buy patterns for pants, petti-pants and half-slips to fit hip measurement; full slip and gown to fit bust; or make your own patterns from old garments that have both style and fit you like. A wide range of styles and trimming suggestions make sewing lingerie an adventure in creativity.

For a Lining: Linings are optional for knits; however, suit jackets, vests and skirts are often lined to produce a finished look. Linings also eliminate irritation from a scratchy fabric, protect seam allowances from abrasion, and inhibit stretchiness in fabrics. A lining will also avoid the need for a slip, since it will reduce wrinkles and clinging. Tricot that matches or contrasts in color may be used.

For Men's and Women's Outerwear: Purchase patterns designed for knits as you normally would. Look for stretchable unbonded knits when purchasing the fabric.

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FABRIC PREPARATION

Preshrink the fabric to prevent skipping of machine stitches.

Mark the fabric's wrong side at selvages with red or blue pencil or transparent cellophane tape. Determine wrong side by stretching fabric edge on the crosswise grain. It will roll to the right side. Since tricot stretches, don't let it hang off the flat surface when cutting.

Arrange pattern pieces so the crosswise grain goes around the body to give stretch where most needed. The pattern may need to be weighted down to prevent shifting.

Marking—Cut notches rather than snipping into seam allowances. Transfer markings with pins or pretested red or blue pencil. Spray starch or hair spray may be used along the fabric edges for easier cutting and stitching.

SEWING TRICOT

Preparation of Sewing Machine:

Use a straight stitch or zigzag machine. Do not use zigzag attachment because it "grabs" and damages tricot.

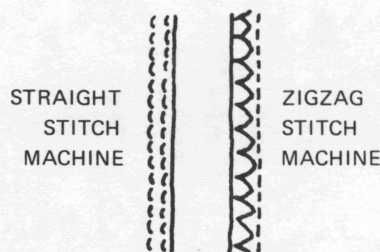
- Loosen tension as much as possible, keeping balanced stitch.
- Pressure should be regulated at medium to slightly above medium setting.
- Use 10–12 stitches to the inch.

Stitching

- Tricot must be lightly stretched in stitching to put extra thread in the seams for give.
- Causes of bunching—Backstitching and static electricity may draw threads to bobbin area, so hold both thread-ends back when lowering needle.
- Eliminate skipped stitches with slow, even stitching speed. Stretching keeps the fabric down and prevents skipping. Rub seamline with a moist (not wet) sponge that will help eliminate static which sometimes causes skipping, especially in dry climates.
- Never stitch over pins. Since tricot is light, a pin may pull the fabric up and cause the seam to be uneven. Instead, stitch up to a pin, remove it, then continue stitching the seam.

Seams

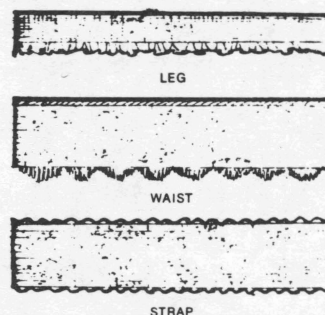
- First Row—use a straight stitch.
- Second Row—either a straight or zigzag stitch can be used. For a straight stitch make the second row $\frac{1}{8}$ inch from the first row. For zigzag stitch, sew close to the first. Trim seam if necessary. In general, tricot seams do not have to be pressed.



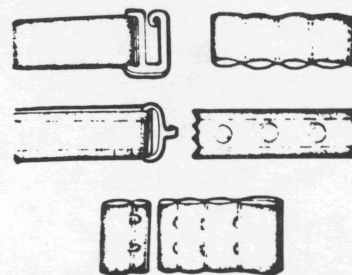
Many new machines have special stretch stitches that are perfect for tricot. These include both straight and decorative stitches that automatically incorporate stretch into a seam. Machines are also available which stitch and overcast a seam all in one step.

FINDINGS FOR LINGERIE

Elastic—Use "soft" elastic, or elastic with one fluted edge and one straight edge, and either edge may go up. Nylon elastic is best for lingerie with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch width for waist and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch width for legs.

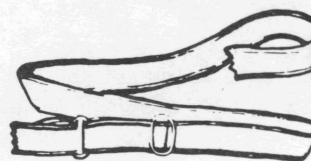


Bra Fasteners—Fasteners are available in both traditional and tricot fabrics.



Lace Edging—Stretch lace for curved edges. Non-stretch lace that has been preshrunk can be used for straight edges.

Shoulder Straps—Ready-made adjustable straps can be purchased or you may make them of ribbon or self-fabric.



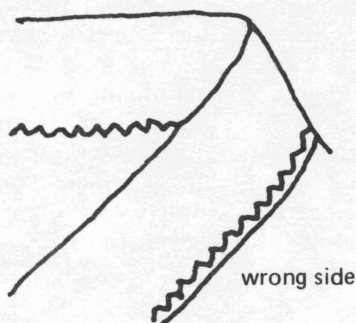
ELASTIC FOR LINGERIE

To determine the length needed, follow these directions:

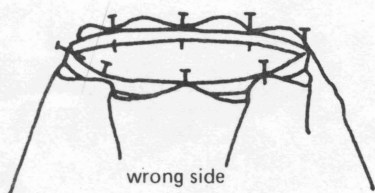
- Waist—for casing, deduct 2 inches from waist measurement. For topstitched, deduct 3 inches.
- Hips—for (bikinis) for casing, deduct 8 inches from measurement where top edge comes; for topstitched, deduct 9 inches.
- Legs—for panty briefs use elastic the same measurement as around the top of the leg. For bikini legs, try on panties and hold tape measure around leg along edge of fabric. Use this measurement. If elastic is topstitched deduct 1 inch.

Attaching Elastic

- Elastic in casing—Seam allowance should be the width of the elastic plus $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Fold edge to wrong side on seamline; pin. Stitch close to raw edge with straight or zigzag stitch; leave small opening. Insert elastic. Overlap ends $\frac{1}{2}$ inch and stitch securely; close opening.



- Topstitched Elastic—Cut away seam allowance of garment. Join elastic ends in $\frac{1}{2}$ inch seam, sewing back and forth several times. Open seam and sew flat with a rectangle of long stitches. On elastic and garment edge, mark off eight equal parts. At these points, pin wrong side of elastic to right side of garment with edges even. Stitch very slowly along lower edge of elastic, stretching both elastic and tricot. Repeat along upper edge. If using a zigzag stitch around leg,

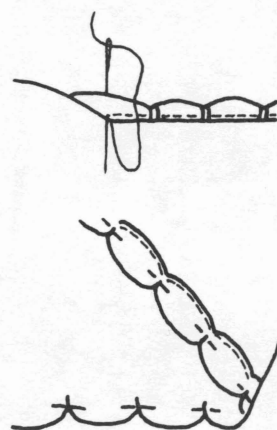


make one row of stitches through middle of elastic (stitch half the width of elastic).

EDGE FINISHES

- Lace—At corners, form miters. Pin lace in place, folding it with excess on the wrong side. Remove lace and topstitch miter. Cut excess lace close to stitching. Repin lace to garment; stitch. Tricot may be trimmed away under lace for a see-through effect.
- Shell Edging—Trim seam allowance to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch; fold to wrong side on seamline. Working on wrong side, take two or three small running stitches along raw edge in seam allowance only. Take two stitches over edge of hem pulling thread taut.

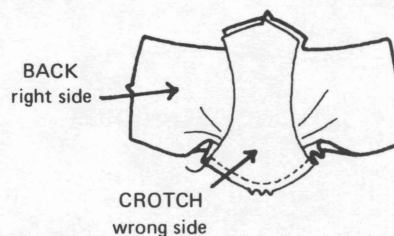
Other hem finishes such as tailored hem, rolled hem and French binding give a nice appearance.



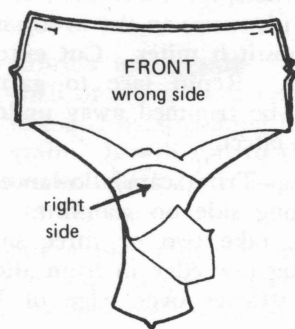
CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES FOR PANTY BRIEFS SEWING THE CROTCH

This is a machine method where all seams are enclosed. Crotch seam allowance are generally $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, and the wider end of the crotch is the back.

Place crotch pieces together, right sides facing. Place pants back piece between the two crotch pieces and pin in center with all edges even; stitch.

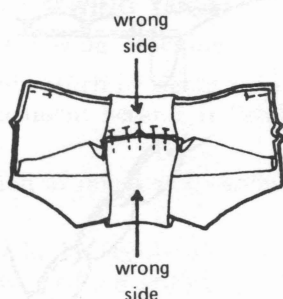


Place front and back pieces together, right sides facing.

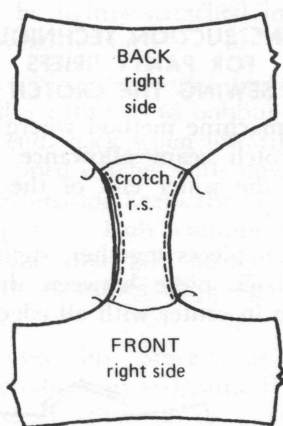


Bring end of top crotch piece up to front crotch seam, right sides facing; pin.

Wrap free crotch piece back around panties over waist, and pin to front piece, right side of crotch piece to wrong side of front piece; stitch.



Pull out panties and edge-stitch open crotch pieces together.



LINING TECHNIQUES

For Slacks, Skirt or Dress

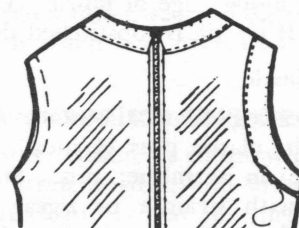
Using the garment's main pattern pieces, cut

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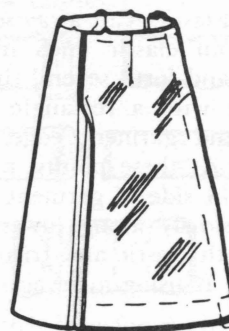
and construct the lining. With the wrong sides together, pin the lining to the garment at the neckline and armhole edges, or at the waistline before joining the facings, sleeves, or waistband. When the lining is positioned properly, slipstitch the lining to the zipper tape, and baste the pinned edges. Additional garment sections can be attached in the usual manner, and the lining will be permanently inserted. The facings can be blind-stitched to the lining. Complete the garment by hemming the two layers separately.



For Partial Lining in Skirt

A partial lining will prevent stretching in some knit garments. To line a skirt back, use the back pattern piece to cut the lining. Make it either the full skirt length or cut it off just below the buttocks so the lining will absorb sitting strain. Transfer all pattern markings, and baste the lining to the fabric with wrong sides together, along the seam-lines and darts. Complete the lower edge of the shorter lining with a clean finish hem.

From here on, treat the two layers as one and complete the skirt. On the full-length lining, sew the skirt hem to only the lining.



For lining other types of garments, follow the pattern guide.

Acknowledgment

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